

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 0574

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: U.S. PRESENTATION ON CHANGES IN DETERRENT POLICY

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECDEF, USNMR SHAPE, USCINCEUR, USLOSACLANT,
CINCLANT

REF: (A) STATE 022542 (NOTAL); (B) STATE 20400 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: AT FEBRUARY 4 NPG PERM REPS MEETING, U.S.
(RUMSFELD) MADE PRESENTATION ON ABOVE SUBJECT, ESSENTIALLY
CONTAINED REF (A). PRESENTATION WAS VERY WELL RECEIVED; DISCUSSION
CENTERED PARTICULARLY ON LIKELY SOVIET PERCEPTION OF AND
RESPONSE TO MODIFIED U.S. POLICY, AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO NATO
DOCTRINE AND MNCS' TARGETING PLANS. SEVERAL PERM REPS
EXPRESSED WISH TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE ON SUBJECT LATER. END
SUMMARY.

1. ALL PERM REPS WHO SPOKE EMPHASIZED THEIR APPRECIATION
FOR RUMSFELD'S STATEMENT, TEXT OF WHICH WAS DISTRIBUTED AT
MEETING AND IS BEING REPEATED BY SEPTEL. QUESTIONS AND
COMMENTS ARE SUMMARIZED IN FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS, AS WELL AS
RUMSFELD'S RESPONSES.

2. CATALANO (ITALY) READ LENGTHY STATEMENT PREPARED BEFORE
HEARING PRESENTATION, WHICH HE AGREED TO CIRCULATE. THRUST OF
TWO QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN HIS STATEMENT SEEMED TO BE (A) ON THE
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ASSUMPTION THAT COORDINATION
MUST NOW TAKE PLACE BETWEEN NEW U.S. PLANS AND SACEUR'S STRIKE PLAN,
WHAT NATO FORUM SHOULD GIVE GENERAL DIRECTION
FOR SUCH COORDINATION, AND (B) WHAT IS LIKELY TO

BE THE SOVIET REACTION TO THE ANNOUNCED U.S. POLICY REVISION? SVAART (DENMARK) FOLLOWED UP ON SECOND POINT. NOTING HIS CERTAINTY THAT U.S. STUDIES HAD CONSIDERED POSSIBLE SOVIET REACTIONS, HE ASKED WHAT OUR CONCLUSIONS HAD BEEN.

3. KRAPF (FRG) FIRST COMMENTED THAT, IN HIS VIEW, U.S. STUDIES OF THIS SORT SHOULD BE WELCOMED, SINCE REFINEMENTS IN NATO'S STRATEGY ADD TO ITS CREDIBILITY. HE THEN ASKED: (A) WHICH U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS SYSTEMS WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE CHANGED POLICY? (B) DOES THE NEW POLICY COVER BOTH STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL WEAPONS? AND (C) WILL THERE BE SELECTIVE TARGETING IN OTHER THAN MILITARY FIELDS--I.E., OF INDUSTRIAL AND POPULATION CENTERS?

4. DE STAERCKE (BELGIUM) EMPHASIZED NEED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER PRIVATELY WITHIN THE ALLIANCE RATHER THAN PUBLICLY. HE THEN RAISED QUESTION WHETHER U.S. RETARGETING POLICY WOULD MAKE IT MORE LIKELY THAT THE ENORMOUS NUMBER OF EXISTING U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS WOULD BE USED. HE ASKED GENERAL STEINHOFF FOR HIS ANALYSIS OF THIS QUESTION, AND FURTHER RAISED QUESTION OF WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, REVISED U.S. POLICY WOULD HAVE ON SACEUR AND SACLAN'T'S PLANNING.

5. PECK (U) SAID U.S. STATEMENT CONFIRMED WHAT WAS ALREADY APPARENT FROM PUBLIC SOURCES--THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN U.S. NUCLEAR POLICY. HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT INCREASING OPTIONS IS A GOOD WAY TO INCREASE DETERRENCE, BY KEEPING THE OTHER SIDE GUESSING. HE NOTED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WILL NO DOUBT WISH TO POSE SOME QUESTIONS LATER.

6. MENZIES (CANADA) EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO RETURN TO THE SUBJECT AFTER OTTAWA HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THE MATTER. HE REFERRED TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOVIETS COMPREHENSION OF THE REVISED U.S. POLICY. HE HOPED THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER WOULD PROVIDE A FURTHER BRIEFING ON THE U.S. SIOP AT THE NPG MEETING IN OTTAWA, AT WHICH TIME IT WOULD BE WELL SECRET

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TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE DPC PAPER ON THE CONCEPT FOR THE USE OF THEATER STRIKE FORCES IN ACE REQUIRES REVISION.

7. MENZIES ALSO RAISED QUESTION OF HOW FRANCE SHOULD BE BRIEFED ON THE NEW U.S. POLICY, AND EXPRESSED REGRET THAT THEY WERE NOT PRESENT AT THIS MEETING, PARTICULARLY SINCE THEY HAVE EXPRESSED DOUBT ABOUT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE U.S. STRATEGIC DETERRENT. SYG LUNS AND DE STAERCKE TOOK A CONTRARY VIEW, POINTING TO THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSES OF THE NPG, AND TO FRENCH LACK OF INTEREST IN JOINING.

8. RUMSFELD DREW ON REF (B) IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS AS FOLLOWS: HE EMPHASIZED FIRST THAT WHAT HE HAD DESCRIBED WAS THE

BROAD OUTLINES OF OUR NUCLEAR EMPLOYMENT POLICY, AND THAT WE ARE NOW WORKING TO TRANSLATE THIS BROAD POLICY GUIDANCE INTO SPECIFIC OPERATIONAL PLANS. HE SAID WE INTEND TO KEEP ALLIES INFORMED, AND BELIEVED SECDEF WILL BE PREPARED TO ADDRESS SUBJECT FURTHER AT JUNE NPG MINISTERIAL.

9. RUMSFELD STATED THAT IT IS NOT REPEAT NOT THE INTENT OF U.S. POLICY TO LOWER THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD OR INCREASE RELIANCE ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS. OUR MAIN AIM IS TO STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE BY ADDING TO THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR NUCLEAR WEAPONS BOTH STRATEGIC AND THEATER. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE, AS U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE STRESSED IN RECENT YEARS, THAT NATO MUST HAVE A MAJOR CONVENTIONAL OPTION. THE INTENT OF THE NEW POLICY IS TO MAKE THE NUCLEAR ELEMENT OF THE DETERRENT MORE EFFECTIVE, BUT IN NO SENSE CAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS BE CONSIDERED AN ALTERNATIVE TO ADEQUATE CONVENTIONAL FORCES.

10. WITH RESPECT TO SOVIET PERCEPTION OF U.S. POLICY, RUMSFELD SAID WE HAVE CONSIDERED THIS MATTER AT GREAT LENGTH IN THE COURSE OF OUR STUDIES. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET MISUNDERSTANDING. HOWEVER, WE INTEND TO MAKE CLEAR IN OUR STATEMENTS THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE NEW CONCEPTS IS TO STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE. WE BELIEVE THAT AS THE NEW CONCEPTS ARE FULLY UNDERSTOOD, THEY WILL HAVE THIS EFFECT. HOWEVER, THIS NEEDS TO BE PUT VERY CAREFULLY. WE DO NOT WANT THE SOVIETS TO SEE ANY CHANGES IN OUR NUCLEAR DOCTRINE AS WEAKENING DETERRENCE, BUT NEITHER DO WE WANT THEM TO SEE IT AS A MORE AGGRESSIVE OR THREATENING POSTURE.

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WE HAVE THESE CONFLICTING CONSIDERATIONS FULLY IN MIND.

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECDEF, USNMR SHAPE, USCINCEUR, USLOSACLANT NOR CINCLANT.

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11. RUMSFELD ADDED THAT WE DO NOT NECESSARILY NEED TO PERSUADE THE SOVIET UNION FORMALLY TO ADOPT A SIMILAR POLICY, NOR WILL WE NECESSARILY ATTEMPT TO DO SO. GIVEN THE FACT THAT OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO STRENGTHEN DETERRENCE, WE WILL HAVE ACHIEVED OUR GOAL IF THE SOVIET UNION IS DETERRED WHETHER OR NOT THEY CHANGE THEIR NUCLEAR STRATEGY. HOWEVER, IF DETERRENCE FAILS AND ESCALATION IS TO BE CONTROLLED, BOTH SIDES WOULD HAVE TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN THE USE OF NUCLEAR FORCES. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT IF THE SOVIET UNION PERCEIVES THAT THE U.S. HAS A RANGE OF OPTIONS THEY WOULD WANT TO DEVELOP A RANGE OF OPTIONS THEMSELVES SO AS NOT TO BE IN THE VERY POSITION THAT WE ARE TRYING TO AVOID. THAT IS A SITUATION IN WHICH THEY HAD ONLY THE CHOICE BETWEEN A MASSIVE RESPONSE OR DOING NOTHING.

12. AS TO WHETHER THE SOVIETS THEMSELVES MIGHT PERCEIVE ADVANTAGES IN LIMITED NUCLEAR EXCHANGES, RUMSFELD SAID WE THINK IT VERY UNLIKELY THAT THEY WILL TAKE LIGHTLY THE RISKS OF A NUCLEAR WAR UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. CERTAINLY, WE DO NOT OURSELVES. IN DEVELOPING OUR DOCTRINE, WE HAVE HAD TO WEIGH THE RISKS THAT IT MIGHT REDUCE DETERRENCE AGAINST THE BENEFITS OF ATTEMPTING TO CONTROL ESCALATION IF DETERRENCE FAILED. ON BALANCE, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE NEW DOCTRINE STRENGTHENS DETERRENCE ACROSS THE BOARD AND HAS SOME PROSPECTS OF MITIGATING THE CONSEQUENCES IF DETERRENCE FAILS. HE ADDED THAT THERE IS NO REASON TO ASSUME THAT IF THE U.S. EMPLOYED STRATEGIC FORCES IN LIMITED
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STRIKES THE SOVIETS WOULD RESPOND BY STRIKING TARGETS IN EUROPE RATHER THAN TARGETS IN THE U.S.

13. CONCERNING NATO DOCTRINE, RUMSFELD SAID WE DO NOT ENVISION THAT THE CHANGES WE HAVE SUGGESTED IN EMPLOYMENT POLICY WILL AFFECT NATO DOCTRINE OR EXISTING COMMAND AND CONTROL PROCEDURES. THERE MAY BE SOME CHANGES IN TARGETING IN THE FUTURE BUT WE ARE STILL WORKING ON THIS. WE WOULD PROPOSE TO DISCUSS THESE ISSUES FURTHER IN THE NPG AFTER OUR OWN STUDIES HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. IN RESPONSE TO KRAPF'S QUESTION ABOUT TARGETING, RUMSFELD SAID OUR POLICY OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY ENCOMPASSES A RANGE OF TARGETS, BUT NOTED THAT THIS IS A SUBJECT ON WHICH IT IS DIFFICULT TO GENERALIZE. WE WOULD PREFER TO DEAL WITH IT IN THE NPG AT A LATER DATE. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT IT SEEMS TO US OBVIOUS THAT A "FIRST STRIKE" CAPABILITY IS NOT REPEAT NOT FEASIBLE FOR EITHER SIDE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO STRESS THIS IN OUR PUBLIC STATEMENTS, AS THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HAS ALREADY DONE.

14. RUMSFELD EXPLAINED THAT THERE ARE TWO PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE TIMING OF THE U.S. POLICY CHANGES. FIRST, THE DEVELOPMENT BY THE SOVIETS OF A SECURE RETALIATORY CAPABIL-

TIY HAS MADE IT INFEASIBLE FOR US TO LIMIT DAMAGE TO LOW LEVELS WITH ABM OR WITH STRIKES AGAINST ENEMY NUCLEAR FORCES. THUS, WE HAVE SOUGHT TO DEVELOP MEANS TO LIMIT DAMAGE BY LIMITING ESCALATION. SECOND, AS THE PRESIDENT HAS STATED, WE HAVE LONG DESIRED AND PLANNED FOR FLEXIBLE OPTIONS WITHIN OUR ACTUAL CAPABILITIES. BUT WE HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY HAD ALL THE TOOLS NEEDED. WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF MINUTEMAN III, POSEIDON, AND CERTAIN COMMAND, CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES, 23 #-;3 -CQUIRED ADDITIONAL TOOLS WITH WHICH TO INCREASE FLEXIBILITY AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL OPTIONS. WE CHOSE TO DISCUSS IN GREATER DETAIL THE NEED FOR INCREASED FLEXIBILITY NOW SO AS TO HELP INFORM PUBLIC OPINION PRIOR TO PRESENTATION BY SECRETARY SCHLESINGER OF HIS ANNUAL DEFENSE REPORT TO THE U.S. CONGRESS.

15. GENERAL STEINHOFF (CHIARMAN, MILITARY COMMITTEE) FIRST RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE AND COMPLEXITY OF THIS MATTER. HE
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EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN THAT IT MIGHT BE DISCUSSED TOO MUCH IN THE PRESS (PRESUMABLY BY UNINFORMED COMMENTATORS.) HE REMINDED PERM REPS THAT BOTH SACEUR AND SACLANT HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO COORDINATE THEIR NUCLEAR TARGETING WITH THE U.S. SIOP ON A SEMI-ANNUAL BASIS. HE ADDED THAT HIS STAFF IS DOING SOME THINKING ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REVISED U.S. POLICY.

16. STEINHOFF WENT ON TO REPORT THAT HE HAD RECENTLY ATTENDED A MEETING ON THIS SUBJECT AT THE IISS IN LONDON, AT WHICH AN INTERESTING BRIEFING WAS PRESENTED BY ONE LYNN DAVIS, AND AT WHICH BOTH U.S. AND FRENCH COFFICIALS, AMONG OTHERS, HAD BEEN PRESENT. HE NOTE

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